

## CONTAINER AND STAND

### Background of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a container and stand for items that enclose a bladder containing liquid, methods for making the container and stand and methods for using and transporting the container and stand.

### Background Art

[0002] Boxed containers that enclose a bladder containing liquid have been used in the beverage industry. In particular, this type of boxed container has been used to package wine. The boxed container and bladder have provided an inexpensive device for maintaining quality of labile liquids during transport and storage. Dispensing liquid from these boxed containers has been difficult, however, because the containers typically have a dispensing valve at or near the bottom of the container. As a result, the container has to be positioned at the edge of a table in order to dispense liquid into a receptacle.

[0003] The Svabek et al. patent, U.S. Pat. No. 6,595,475, issuing July 22, 2003, describes a support stand for a boxed beverage container. The stand is formed from rigid wires and includes a platform supported by two legs. The legs are inter-engagable and lock with locking hoops formed as part of the wire support.

### Description of the Drawings

[0004] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the container and stand of the present invention.

[0005] FIG. 2 is a right side view of the container and stand embodiment of FIG. 1.

[0006] FIG. 3 is a front face view of the embodiment of FIG. 1.

- [0007] FIG. 4 is a left side view of the container and stand embodiment of FIG. 1.
- [0008] FIG. 5 is a top plan view of the container and stand of FIG. 1 in a collapsed position.
- [0009] FIG. 6 is a top plan view of the container and stand of FIG. 1 in an expanded position.
- [0010] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of two components of the container and stand of FIG. 1.
- [0011] FIG. 8 is a top plan view of a blank of the container and stand of the embodiment shown in FIG. 1.
- [0012] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a container and stand that includes metal legs.
- [0013] FIG. 10 is a view illustrating metal legs of the embodiment shown in FIG. 9 in a folded position.
- [0014] FIG. 11 is another embodiment of a container and stand.
- [0015] FIG. 12 is an open view of the embodiment of FIG. 11.
- [0016] FIG. 13 is another embodiment of the container and stand.
- [0017] FIG. 14 is another embodiment of the container and stand.
- [0018] FIG. 15 is another embodiment of the container and stand that further includes fasteners for beverage containers.

#### Disclosure

[0019] One embodiment of the container and stand of the invention, illustrated generally at 10 in FIGs. 1, 2, 3, and 4 includes a main body 12, having four panels 14, 16, 18 and 20 generally rectangular in shape. Two opposing panels 14 and 18 terminate in flanges 22 and 24, respectively. The main body 12 supports a container 26 that encloses a bladder (not shown). For some embodiments, the bladder contains a beverage, such as wine or other beverage susceptible to oxidation. While beverages are described, it is understood that the container and stand 10 are usable with any container that encloses a bladder.

**[0020]** The container 26 includes a valve 28, illustrated in FIG. 2 for dispensing the beverage from the bladder. The main body 12 of the container and stand 10 is sized so that a receptacle such as a glass 30 is positionable at an optimal distance from the dispensing valve 28. The distance is optimal in that dispensed liquid has a minimal amount of splashing and all dispensed liquid is retained within the glass.

**[0021]** The main body 12 of the container and stand 10 is also sized so that the container 26 fits snugly between the flanges 22 and 24, as shown in a side view in FIG. 4. Additionally, the main body 12 of the container and stand 10 is expandable, from a first length, shown in FIG. 5 to a second longer length, shown in FIG. 6. The main body 12 is expandable because the main body 12 includes two opposing and interconnecting components 32 and 34, shown in FIGs. 6 and 7.

**[0022]** A plan view for one of the components 32, is illustrated at 80 in FIG. 8. While a description of component 32 is described herein, it is understood that component 34 is substantially identical to component 32. The component 32 includes the panel 14 with flange 22. Fold lines 40 and 50 separate the panel 14 from sidewalls 16 and 20. Adjacent sidewall 20 is a foldline 70 that separates top panel 48 from the sidewall 20. Adjacent top panel 48 is foldline 72 that separates the top endwall 48 from internal wall 46. Internal wall 46, when in a folded position, is parallel to and opposing sidewall 20. Adjacent sidewall 20 is another foldline 68 that separates sidewall 20 from bottom panel 54. Adjacent internal wall 46 is foldline 74 that separates internal wall 46 from a second bottom panel 44. The panels 54 and 44 are attached to each other. In one embodiment, the panels 54 and 44 are adhered to each other with an adhesive. As a result, the walls 20, 48, 46, and 54 define a space 57, shown in FIG. 7. The walls and panels 20, 46, 48, and 54 are foldable to define a slider 80, shown in FIG. 8. A second slider 82, shown in FIG. 7, is also contiguous to the wall 20. The second slider defines a space 84.

**[0023]** Component 34, includes sliders 86 and 88, respectively, illustrated in FIG. 7. The sliders 86 and 88 are made from a blank substantially identical to the blank 80 used to make component 32. To make the stand and container of the

present invention, the sliders 86 and 88 are inserted into spaces 57 and 84 formed by sliders 80 and 82. The stand and container 10 is elongated by moving the component panels 14 and 18 away from each other. The stand and container 10 are shortened by moving the walls 14 and 18 toward each other. In one embodiment, the panels 14 and 18 include fingerholes to facilitate movement of the panels 14 and 18. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 7, the sliders 86 and 88 and 80 and 82 are rotatable about the foldline that separates the sliders from the wall with a flange. The components 32 and 34 are foldable so that the components are flat with only the panel 14 and 18, respectively, visible.

**[0024]** The stand and container device 10 is made from a sturdy and durable material such as cardboard, or a polymeric material. For some embodiments, the material is foldable. The stand and container 10 includes, in some embodiments, decorative indicia and instructions for assembly and use. The instructions are located on one or more of the walls or panels.

**[0025]** The stand and container 10 of the invention is made by assembling two blanks, such as the blank shown at 80 in FIG. 8. Each blank 80 shown in FIG. 8 is usable for fabricating one of the two components 32 and 34 required. The blank is fabricated using conventional procedures for blank manufactured. The stand and container 10 is made using conventional procedures for folding blanks into containers.

**[0026]** Some embodiments of the invention include kits. Elements of the kits include the stand and container of the invention 10, the box containing a beverage within a bladder 26, and, optionally, one or more receptacles 30 for receiving the beverage. In one particular embodiment, the beverage is wine and the receptacles are wine glasses. In one embodiment, the wine glasses are contained within a space 83, shown in FIG. 5 and are fixed within space of the stand and container. The wine glasses are fixed with a mechanism such as a strap mechanism, shown in FIG. 16. The stand and container 10 includes indicia describing features and instructions for assembling and using the kit. The kits include a range of sizes based upon the size of the container enclosing the bladder containing liquid.

**[0027]** Other kit embodiments of the invention include the stand and container of the invention 10, the box containing a beverage within a bladder 26, and optionally one or more receptacles 30 for receiving the beverage. These elements are placed in a carrier, such as is shown in FIG. 16. The wine glasses are fixed within space of the carrier. The stand and container includes indicia describing features and instructions for assembling and using the kit.

**[0028]** Another kit embodiment includes blanks of the components 32 and 34 that are flattened so that the panel 14 for blank 32 is viewable. This kit also includes the container with the bladder 26 and, optionally, glasses. One or both of the blanks includes indicia containing instructions for one or more of assembly, and use and, optionally, decoration.

**[0029]** One other embodiment of the present invention includes a container 100 with metal legs 102 that are extendable as shown in FIG. 9 and retractable, as shown in FIG. 10. A second container with a bladder containing liquid is positionable within the container 100. The container 100 includes an orifice for a valve 104 on the container enclosing the bladder.

**[0030]** In one embodiment, the container 100 with the second container is positioned within a carrying device, shown at 110 in FIG. 11. The carrying device 110 includes a strap 112, handle 114, and decorative indicia. The carrying device includes an opening for a valve or pour spout. Some carrying device embodiments include insulation to keep a liquid cool or hot.

**[0031]** Another carrying device is shown at 200 in FIG. 15. The device 200 includes straps 202 that enable the device 200 to be carried as a backpack. The device 200 includes a carrier 204 for carrying the container with the bladder containing liquid. The device 200 also includes a compartment 206 for storing beverage containers and a compartment 208 for housing a pour spout. The device 200 is optionally insulated.

**[0032]** While a container with the bladder containing liquid is shown for device 200 and device 100, it is understood that the device 100 and the device 200

are capable of carrying the stand and container of the invention, along with the container with the bladder.

**[0033]** The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, limited only by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of functional equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.